

2018/19 SMALL MILLING RESEARCH PROJECT INVESTMENT

APPLICATION KIT

Introduction

Sugar Research Australia (SRA) invests in and manages a portfolio of research, development and adoption (RD&A) projects that drive productivity, profitability and sustainability for the Australian sugarcane industry.

The new [SRA Strategic Plan 2017/18-2021/22](#) describes the future direction for sugar industry investment in Research, Development and Adoption (RD&A) activities and is available on the SRA website. The Strategic Plan was developed through consultation within the industry and is aligned with the National Sugarcane Industry Research, Development and Extension (RD&E) Strategy, the Commonwealth Government's Science and Research Priorities and Rural RD&E Priorities, and the Queensland Government's Strategic Objectives for investment in the sugarcane industry.

The Strategic Plan will drive the industry forward through the four overarching goals of profitability, improved sustainability, enhanced capability and organisational excellence. It outlines nine Key Focus Areas (KFA) for industry activities, with KFA5 (Milling efficiency and technology) and KFA6 (Product diversification and value addition) being the focal points for this investment scheme.

The Small Milling Research Project (SMRP) investment scheme is an initiative to invest in lower cost, short-term, industry-identified and preferably industry-led research projects to develop a product, service or process that will solve targeted problems in sugar mills and deliver tangible outputs with almost immediate outcomes. In the process, the scheme will strengthen collaborations between industry and research through the direct involvement of the milling sector in SMRPs and increase research skills and capability in sugar mills.

SRA expects that all outcomes and intellectual property (IP) generated from SMRPs will be made freely available within the Australian sugar industry.

SMRP proposals will be competitively awarded and assessed against the selection criteria outlined in this Application Kit, or may in special circumstances be specifically commissioned to solve a high-priority industry-identified problem.

SMRP investment by SRA will be restricted to a maximum of \$75,000 per project, with the entire scheme capped at \$250,000 per year. The expectation is that successful projects will be completed within a 12-month period from execution .

This application kit provides information to assist applicants in the preparation of SMRP applications for competitive funding in 2018.

SMRP research investment process

All proposals will be rigorously assessed by an evaluation group comprising of the Milling Research Advisory Committee (MRAC) and at least one member from each of the SRA Research Funding Panel (RFP) and the Research Funding Unit (RFU). This evaluation group will ensure that only projects that address industry-identified issues and meet the selection criteria will be shortlisted for investment. SRA may choose to appoint an alternative delegate(s) to the evaluation group if RFP/RFU members are unable to participate.

SRA will run a single-stage assessment process for SMRP applications. The evaluation group will provide their assessment and project rankings to the RFP, who will subsequently make an investment recommendation to the SRA Board. Contracting and project management of successful projects will be the responsibility of the RFU.

Finalised applications must be completed using the SMRP Application Form and submitted to SRA by email to funding@sugarresearch.com.au by **16 February 2018**.

Guidelines for applicants

In order to maximise the likelihood of success, applications must clearly align with milling and SRA RD&A priorities. The proposed research projects should be solving industry identified problems and aim to deliver almost immediate outcomes that will be readily adopted. The application must specify the industry need for the proposed activities, provide a clear description of outputs, outcomes and industry benefit and describe plans for their subsequent adoption.

The SMRP investment scheme has been established to develop or test products, services or processes to provide solutions for sugar mills and deliver tangible outputs with immediately foreseeable outcomes.

The scheme encourages applications from milling organisations, equipment manufacturers/suppliers, consultants, research organisations or other organisations. **However, at least one of the project participants must be from a milling organisation.** This will ensure that projects are practical and remain focused on delivering industry benefit.

The potential attractiveness of applications will be enhanced by financial co-investment within the project.

Other information

The evaluation group will consider the following issues during their assessment of applications:

- How significant is the issue being addressed?
- What positive impact will your project have if successful?
- Are participating organisations making appropriate financial and other contributions, especially time?
- What is the likelihood of delivering the desired outcomes?
- Project outcomes need a plausible scenario for adoption

What can I use SMRP funds for?

- Research funds can be used for salaries, travel and operating expenses.
- Salaries should only be requested for staff that are essential for the project. Small staff inputs into projects should be provided as in-kind contributions.
- Capital purchases may be considered but must be essential in order to conduct project activities or they will not be approved.
- All travel requested must be essential in order to conduct project activities. International travel will not be supported.

Timeline for the 2018/19 project call

The table below outlines the timeline for the conduct of the complete research project call leading to 2018 project investment. These dates may be subject to minor changes but are not expected to change significantly.

Activity	Key Dates - 2018/19
Project call for SMRPP applications	22 December 2017
Completed SMRPP applications lodged with SRA-RFU	16 February 2018
Notification of outcome	20 April 2018
Contracted project to commence	14 May 2018 or after